

MOONSHINE



A FILM BY ROGER INGRAHAM

77 minutes, Color, Unrated
OFFICIAL SUNDANCE SELECTION 2006
MOONSHINETHEMOVIE.COM

“...a movie to admire”

— JAMES EMANUEL SHAPIRO reel.com

“You haven't heard of the vampire film
Moonshine yet, but you will.”

— JASON SILVERMAN Wired News

“Impressive debut film.”

— JOSEPH BEYER Sundance Film Festival

LOGLINE :

A young convenience store clerk's passionless existence is altered eternally when a vampire steps out of the shadows.

THE SYNOPSIS :

In a working class Connecticut town, 19-year-old Peter's (Brian Greer) monotonous life is about to end. During the day, he tends to a sick mother and a wheelchair-bound father. At night, he fends off advances from his boss (Ginny Fitzpatrick) at the local convenience store. The nights pass and he finds himself slipping into an uneasy relationship with an engaged co-worker (Sarah Ingraham).

One night in the cellar, lit by a dangling bulb, something emerges to take his life. A dark man creeps beneath the light. His wiry hair hides his glossy eyes, boney face, and a pair of fangs beneath his lips.

In his debut, Director Roger Ingraham breathes new life into what a vampire film can be. The innovative, richly textured and highly realistic "Moonshine" will haunt moviegoers long after they leave the theatre.

DIRECTOR ROGER INGRAHAM'S BIO:

Born January 27th, 1984, Roger Ingraham grew up in Stafford Springs, Connecticut. After sophomore year, he asked his parents to let him drop out of high school to home school himself. After much convincing, they graciously said yes. He spent his days reading, writing, drawing, playing video games; and, on a more studious note, passing some University art classes and a year in Costa Rica as an exchange student. What would have been freshman year in college, he drove across the states to Los Angeles, got a cheap apartment in South Central, and tried to get a job as a production assistant (PA) in the film industry. Two short films, a PA job, and one year later, he retired back to Connecticut to write and direct his own film. His mother, his father, and two of his great aunts gave him a little money; and his sister agreed to play the lead female role. He gathered a camera, a crew, and a cast from New York. As for the remainder, the town of Stafford lent him cop cars, uniforms, even the town hall. His parents moved out of their house for a month; the camera crew moved in. And so for \$9200, at the age of 20, Roger was able to shoot his first feature film, titled Moonshine. Late January 2006, at the Sundance film festival, he will turn 22 two days after "Moonshine" premieres.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT:

Moonshine is really about breaking free. The tagline says it all: "Wouldn't life be perfect...if we weren't at its mercy." When I was 18 years old, driving back home to Connecticut from my year in LA, I felt naive to not have known that filmmaking was just a business, an industry. I used to tell my friends "I can't imagine a better job than being a director. How many people get to play make-believe for a living." Well, somewhere between the coasts of America, speeding home, I might have had a crazy idea, "wouldn't life be perfect if I could borrow a little money, trick a few friends into helping, and make my own film."

Back in 2003, as the film shoot was gearing up, the digital revolution was already fully underway. The Panasonic 24p camera I used for Moonshine had just come out, retailing at \$3500. I didn't have to rent one; I had enough college funds to buy one. The poster boys for independent film, like Robert Rodriguez, didn't have the luxury of shooting digital. They shot 16 mm and counted their seconds. Times have changed and now, in a lot of ways, the only ingredients you really need are already in the kitchen. I used to think that, just like bad things, good things only happen to other people. But there are festivals like Sundance who really are listening for the underdogs.

I don't intend to tell anyone it's easy and or tell them it's hard. Or maybe I'll tell them both. One thing I know is that anyone can do it. And you don't need 10 Men in suits giving the "go" with millions of dollars and movie star connections.

RECIPE FOR MOONSHINE:
(WARNING: the following concoction
can be dangerous when ingested)

An entire box of commitment, a scriptful of life, 1 big jug of sweat, a crewful of brains, and one stubborn kid to say "action." Stir mixture in a small town and cover. Chemical reaction takes 2 1/2 years. Remove seal and enjoy Moonshine.

I dedicate this film to all the people who find a way to do the impossible... and to the cause of ultra-low budget filmmaking.

SCREENSHOTS :

The press is welcome to visit www.moonshinethemovie.com to find screenshots available for their use.

DIRECTOR ON THE TITLE OF THE FILM :

"The title of the film, Moonshine, refers to two things: The illegal drink and the natural satellite - the moon - which revolves around our planet. The film takes place in one week of time, ¼ of the moon's cycle. At the film's climax, the moon is full."

"Most people take it for granted that the planets are way up there and we are way down here. The connection between the two is often lost. Some of the most integral things such as the flow of water here on earth - the waxing and waning from high to low tide - are defined or affected by the moon."

"Although not blatantly mentioned in "Moonshine," the cycle of the moon can be used to understand the unfolding of events that occur as the film progresses. Understanding the profound powers of lunar and planetary phenomena can help us understand the mysteries that occur here on earth."

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY :

The film was edited almost completely on a Powerbook G4 with Final Cut Pro and two 500 Gig Lacie drives. It was shot on the 24p digital camera by Panasonic, the AGDVX100A.

At the time of the production of "Moonshine," this Panasonic camera had just been released. During production, the camera settings were tweaked. The shutter speed was set to 1/48th during dialogue scenes, while action was shot at a higher shutter speed of between 1/120^h and 1/250th. The scenes were lit accordingly and the end result is something very close to 16mm.

Final Cut Pro has proven to be varied enough in capabilities to serve as the sole Non-linear Editing Program for the film. The special effects of the film were produced frame by frame using Adobe's Photoshop CS. For creation of the trailer, which can be seen at www.moonshinethemovie.com, the director utilized Adobe's After Effects 6.5.

THE MUSIC :

The director, along with composer Chris Caouette, used a background score composed of tones, which subtly underlay the more obvious classical score. A tone is sometimes just a line of rumbling base that rises and lowers during the scene, almost subconsciously. Other times, it is a high pitched buzz almost out of the range of hearing or a soft soothing hum. This hidden soundtrack often contradicts the emotion and feeling of the more obvious music playing in the foreground. The result is a subconscious puppeteering of the audience's tension level. The tones imperceptibly affect the viewer into states of mind, be it calm or frantic.

While the director had seen this technique used before, he felt it had never been fully embraced before, especially in the horror genre where most sound design is obvious and blatant. "Moonshine" steadily moves into the audience's subconscious with subtle blends of sound. Even the film's often-used sound of crickets becomes a large and effective part of the subliminal effort.

The more obvious music used in the film varies. It is often found playing from a source in the film, such as a character's car radio or a CD player. The score is mainly a selection of sharp classical pieces. The occasional rock and jazz songs are also in the mix.

VIOLENCE IN THE FILM:

The film, being in the horror genre, and specifically that of the vampire vein, contains a significant amount of violence and gore. The attack scenes, chockfull of fangs, flesh, and blood, are both real and brutal. There are also jarring car accidents and a dog is killed off-screen.

FUN FACTS ON BLOOD:

Our Moonshine blood mix involved detergent, dyes, chocolate sauce, cornstarch and peanut butter. We used about three different mixes with different ingredients and consistencies.

We had an edible one, which ends up being very important when it comes to vampires who are constantly ingesting this stuff.

- 1 pint of clear corn syrup
- 100 drops red food coloring
- 1/4 cup of water
- 1/4 cup sifted flour or corn starch
- 8 drops blue food coloring

When it comes down to dribbling blood on one's clothes, there is a special blend with detergent in it.

16 oz. White corn syrup (Karo syrup - this is a US product, but adding golden syrup does the job just as well, alternatively just mix sugar and water and reduce on the stove until it becomes syrupy)

- 1 oz. red food coloring
- 1 oz. washing detergent
- 1 oz. water

The most important aspect was using a large array of thickness consistencies. The color red was not at all a constant until after post-production color timing, at which point we corrected for that deeper, richer red.

THE BUDGET AND CREATIVITY:

Moonshine was created for roughly 9,200 dollars! But the sky was the limit for the film's production capacity. The crew and the 20-year-old director and producer created a large-scale film set in a small town.

The bigger scenes feature masses of extras, special effects, and even, in several cases, full blown car accidents. Meanwhile, the cost of production is 1/1000th of the Hollywood equivalent.

Through the forum on the film's official website (www.moonshinethemovie.com) the director, Roger Ingraham, answers questions on ultra-low-budget filmmaking. In support of productions like Moonshine, he maintains that "the creative freedom to write and do whatever you feel, this right easily outweighs the difficulties."

Roger has, in much the same way, redefined his own lifestyle. His diet now consists largely of soups, rice, vegetables, and oatmeal and is actually healthier – and less expensive – than the average American's diet. He lives in a shed-turned-cabin on his family's property.

His home boasts 1 electrical outlets, a woodstove, a bookshelf, a futon, and a rocking chair. Roger no longer drives but instead walks from place to place. What would have been his college fund (he never went) is used to subsidize his cost of living, which amounts to roughly 3,000 dollars a year.

Roger states that in the same way a low cost production gives the director autonomy, a simple life has allowed him the choice to live freely. Seated in the rocking chair in his shed, he often jokes about having already retired at the ripe age of 21.